



★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

Candidacy Requirements for the November 7, 2017 General Election

Governor of Virginia

Lieutenant Governor of Virginia

Attorney General

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3 General Disclaimer

This candidacy requirements bulletin provides an overview of Virginia electoral requirements. It is not legal advice nor is it a binding statement of official policy. It is a description of general law found in the Code of Virginia. Applicable laws and regulations are subject to change in content and interpretation. Local charters may set different requirements. Candidates are responsible for verifying the status of, and complying with, current laws and regulations.

4 Filing Deadlines and Where to File

4.1 For a party candidate nominated by a method other than a primary

Postmarks are acceptable for items 1 and 2 only if these documents are mailed by registered or certified mail and a receipt showing date of mailing can be produced if demanded by the office with which the forms are filed.

Required Forms	Where to File	Filing Deadline
1. Statement of Economic Interests	Conflict of Interest Advisory Council	June 13 at 7:00 p.m.
2. Certificate of Candidate Qualification	Department of Elections	June 13 at 7:00 p.m.
3. Party Certification (SBE-511)	Department of Elections	June 19 at 5:00 p.m.

4.2 For a primary candidate

Items 4, 5 and 6 must be received by the legislative district political party chairman, as applicable to the office sought, by the filing deadline. Postmarks are acceptable only for Items 1 and 2 and only if they are mailed by registered or certified mail and a receipt showing date of mailing can be produced if demanded by the Department of Elections.

Required Forms	Where to File	Filing Deadline
1. Statement of Economic Interests	Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council	March, 30 at 5:00 p.m.
2. Certificate of Candidate Qualification	Department of Elections	
3. Primary Filing Fee		
4. Declaration of Candidacy		
5. Petitions of Qualified Voters		
6. Receipt showing payment of primary filing fee		No earlier than March 13 at noon and no later than March 30 at 5:00 p.m.

4.3 For an independent (non-party) candidate

Items 3 and 4 listed below must be received by the general registrar by the filing deadline. Postmarks are acceptable only for Items 1 and 2 only if they are mailed by registered or certified mail and a receipt showing date of mailing can be produced if demanded by the office with which the forms are filed.

Required Forms	Where to File	Filing Deadline
1. Statement of Economic Interests	Conflict of Interest Advisory Council	June 13 at 7:00 p.m.
2. Certificate of Candidate Qualification	Department of Elections	
3. Declaration of Candidacy		
4. Petitions of Qualified Voters		

5 Qualifications to be a Candidate

A candidate must meet each of the following requirements:

1. Qualified to vote for and hold the office sought
2. A resident¹ of the Commonwealth for one year immediately preceding the election
3. A resident, by the time of filing, of the city or town in which he offers for election [or has an application for registration, transfer, or change of address on file in the general registrar's office]

6 Forms

A candidate must file certain documents in order to qualify to appear on the ballot.² Each form is described below. An explanation of who is required to file each item also is provided.

6.1 Certificate of Candidate Qualification ([SBE-501](#))

All candidates to appear on a ballot are required to file this form. Using this form, candidates certify under oath to the Department of Elections that they meet the qualifications set out in the Code of Virginia.³ Candidates for commonwealth-wide offices file this form with the Department of Elections.

¹ For guidance in determining residency see § [24.2-101](#), definition of “residence,” and administrative regulations [1 VAC 20-40-20](#) and [1 VAC 20-40-30](#).

² Each document can be downloaded from our website: elections.virginia.gov.

³ Va. Code § [24.2-501](#).

6.2 Declaration of Candidacy ([SBE-505/520](#))

This form must be filed with the Petition of Qualified Voters.⁴ It is a required filing for independent (non-party) candidates and primary election candidates. All candidates for commonwealth-wide office file this form with the Department of Elections. Party candidates nominated by a non-primary method are not required to submit a declaration unless required by their party to do so.

6.3 Petition of Qualified Voters ([SBE505/612](#))

This form is prepared and distributed by the Department of Elections in two sizes: legal and letter.⁵ Petitions must be filed together with the Declaration of Candidacy. Candidates for special elections may not circulate petitions until after the issuance of the writ or order calling the election. Candidates for commonwealth-wide office must collect 10,000 signatures, including the signatures of at least 400 qualified voters from each congressional district in the Commonwealth.⁶ Please review the State Boards regulation regarding material omissions from petitions of qualified voters before circulating the Petition of Qualified Voters form.⁷

A nonparty candidate has the right to appeal a determination by the electoral board that the candidate's petitions do not contain the minimum number of signatures of qualified voters for the office sought.⁸ Candidates have 5 days from the issuance of notice of their disqualification to file their appeal with the determining body.

Appeals are conducted by the determining body in accordance with regulations set forth by the State Board of Elections.⁹ Consideration on appeal is "limited to whether or not the signatures on the petitions that were filed were reasonably rejected according to the requirements of [Title 24.2 of the Code of Virginia and regulations for petitions set forth by the State Board of Elections]. "The candidate bears the burden of proof in establishing that a sufficient number of signatures from qualified voters were timely provided." All appeals are final and not subject to further appeal.

6.4 Statement of Economic Interest ([Ethics-111](#))

This disclosure form is administered by the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory ("COIA") Council.¹⁰ It is available through their website.¹¹ It is required to be filed by all candidates for the commonwealth-wide office. Questions regarding the form should be directed to the COIA Council.

6.5 Party Certification ([SBE-511](#))

A candidate nominated by a political party is not required to submit a Declaration of Candidacy or Petition of Qualified Voters. To certify that a candidate is the nominee of a political party for a special election not

⁴ Va. Code § [24.2-505](#).

⁵ [Letter](#) and [legal](#).

⁶ Va. Code § [24.2-506\(A\)](#).

⁷ [1 VAC 20-50-20](#).

⁸ Va. Code § [24.2-506\(C\)](#)

⁹ [1 VAC 20-50-30](#).

¹⁰ Va. Code § [24.2-502](#).

¹¹ <http://ethics.dls.virginia.gov/>.

being held on the second November election after the vacancy occurred, the appropriate party chairman must file a Party Nominee Certification by the deadline to nominate the candidate.¹² A candidate for a special held at a time other than a general election must be nominated within five days of any writ of election calling a special election to be held less than 60 days after the issuance of the writ.¹³

6.6 Statement of Organization ([CFDA-947.1](#))

While the Statement of Organization is not required to qualify for the ballot, it is required to be submitted by anyone who does qualify for the ballot in addition to other candidates seeking elected office who meet certain criteria.¹⁴ The failure to file the Statement of Organization is not cause for disqualification but will subject a candidate to penalties imposed by the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act.¹⁵

7 Primary Filing Fee

As the name suggests, this fee is required to be filed only by primary election candidates. The amount required to be paid is 2% of the minimum annual salary for the office sought in effect in the year in which the candidate files.

The primary filing fee is paid to the Department of Elections. Candidate primary filing fees will be refunded to unopposed, disqualified or withdrawn candidates. The candidate's written withdrawal notice must be received by the Department before the chairman provides the party's certification of qualified primary candidates to the Department of Elections to ensure a refund. A qualified primary candidate that withdraws after his or her party's certification to ELECT will not receive a refund of his/her primary filing fee.

Candidates who are nominated by a political party by a method other than a primary election may be required to pay a filing fee. This fee is determined by the rules of the political party. Contact your legislative or senatorial district chairman for details.

8 Campaign Finance and Advertising

All candidates for Commonwealth-wide offices must file campaign finance reports on a schedule determined at the time they submit their Statement of Organization. These reports are filed electronically with the Department of Elections.¹⁶ The Act also imposes certain requirements relating to identification of campaign advertisements and communications. Please see the Candidate Campaign Committee Summary published by the Department of Elections for specific requirements.¹⁷

¹² Va. Code § [24.2-511](#)(C).

¹³ Va. Code § [24.2-510](#).

¹⁴ Va. Code § [24.2-947.1](#).

¹⁵ Va. Code § [24.2-953.1](#).

¹⁶ [COMmittee Electronic Tracking](#) (COMET).

¹⁷ [Summary of Laws and Policies for Candidate Campaign Committees](#).

9 Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act

Effective January 1, 2016, the Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act (COIA) requires the State Board of Elections or general registrars to notify all candidates of the provisions of Chapter 31 of Title 2.2 of the Code of Virginia, the Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, Va. Code §§ 2.2-3100 through 2.2-3131.¹⁸

COIA regulates the conduct of Virginia public officials in two basic ways: (1) disclosure requirements for reporting certain types of economic relationships on the Statement of Economic Interests form; and (2) prohibitions against certain conduct or participation in certain transactions. Please see the COIA Council's website for more information.¹⁹

¹⁸ Va Code § [2.2-3101](#). See [The State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act](#).

¹⁹ <http://ethics.dls.virginia.gov/>.



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10 Election Calendar – November 2017 General Election

Election Type	Election Date	Deadlines for Filing			Last Day to Register to Vote	Deadline to Apply for Absentee Ballot
		Candidate Declarations/Petitions	Other Candidate Forms	Party Chairs Certify Candidates		
Party nominations may be made no earlier than April 27 and must be completed by 7:00 p.m., June 13, 2017 (§ 24.2-510)						
Primary	June 13 § 24.2-515	March 13 at 12:00 p.m. to March 30 at 5:00 p.m. § 24.2-522	March 30 at 5:00 p.m. § 24.2-503	April 4 at 5:00 p.m. § 24.2-527	May 22 § 24.2-414, 416	In Person: June 10 By Mail or Online: June 6 at 5:00 p.m. §§ 24.2-701(A), (B)(1), (B)(2)
General	November 7 § 24.2-101	Non-Party Candidates June 13 at 7:00 p.m. § 24.2-507	All Candidates June 13 at 7:00 p.m. § 24.2-503	June 19 at 5:00 p.m. § 24.2-511(B)	October 16 § 24.2-416	In Person: November 4 By Mail or Online: October 31 at 5:00 p.m. §§ 24.2-701(A), (B)(1), (B)(2)
· Notification of adoption of primary must be filed with the Department of Elections by the party chair no sooner than February 8, 2017 nor later than February 28, 2017. (§ 24.2-516) · See the following pages for specifics as to forms required and where each form must be filed. The bulletin and forms are available on our website free of charge: http://elections.virginia.gov/index.php/candidatepac-info/becoming-a-candidate/						
During any election, the polls are required to open at 6:00 a.m. and close at 7:00 p.m. (§ 24.2-603)						

Washington Building
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Richmond, VA 23219

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voice toll-free: 800-552-9745
Email: info@elections.virginia.gov